

# Rose City Copwatch

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<https://rosecitycopwatch.wordpress.com/>

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Dear Rose City Copwatch supporter,

We are writing to inform you that, as of November 4, 2012, Rose City Copwatch has disbanded.

This is not a decision that we made lightly, and it does not come as the result in any internal conflict or controversy. But over the past two years it has become increasingly clear to us that our model of organizing is ill-suited to our present context. Beginning with the period of unrest following Officer Ron Frashour's murder of Aaron Campbell in 2010, and continuing through the Occupy protests and beyond, we have consistently found ourselves struggling to keep pace with events as they unfolded. Meanwhile, a larger and larger share of the attention of our membership and volunteers has been taken up with other projects that were better able to respond to the urgent needs of the present moment. Our efforts to reinvent the organization foundered, largely because we lacked a core group that could devote its full energy to the project. Rather than preserve the organization simply for the sake of preserving the organization, we have decided that the more responsible thing to do is to close it down and turn our attention elsewhere. There's no lack of work to be done. . . .

—and the struggle continues. As a parting gesture, we intend to distribute our remaining resources among other organizations that continue to move us toward the goal of a world without police. Among those groups receiving what is left of our funds are Critical Resistance, Incite: Women of Color Against Violence, the Committee Against Political Repression, and the Rose Hips Medic Collective.

We want to stress that we do not view the end of our organization as a defeat. Rose City Copwatch came into existence under a very specific set of circumstances; that those circumstances have changed is, we believe, partly the result of our work. For almost a decade, we pushed the limits of what was possible in opposition to the police, staking out a position that was, at once, seeking to limit police violence immediately and also focused on the ultimate goal of abolition. During the period of our activity, though not by any means solely by our efforts, police abolition became an established point on the political spectrum, the idea of community-based alternatives to policing has spread across the left (and beyond), and the practice of copwatching has become commonplace even among people who don't know that there's a word for it. No one organization can take credit for those shifts, but we like to think we've done our part.

Of course, we've also made our share of mistakes. As the context changed, it brought to the surface many of the flaws in our organizing, the limits of our structure, and the weaknesses of our strategy. We've all learned much from the experience, and, as a final project, we will be releasing a critical self-assessment sometime next year. It is our hope that an honest accounting will aid the movement even after the organization is gone. We would like to see others learn, both from our successes and from our mistakes.

Finally, thank you for the support you have offered over the past several years. Rose City Copwatch was always a small group, but we knew that others were with us, doing their part to help the work along. Now, as our little group dissolves back into the much larger movement that produced it, we hope that you will take the opportunity to redouble your efforts and continue fighting for a just, free, and equal society.

Don't waste any time with mourning. Organize!

in solidarity,  
Rose City Copwatch